

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9643
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2512

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, SP
SUBJECT: MORE ON THE CENTER

REF: MADRID 2399

1. FERNANDO ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA, THE LEADER OF A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC GROUP (PPDC) WHICH HAS VACILLATED BETWEEN ASSOCIATION WITH THE CD "TEAM" AND THE "CENTRO DEMOCRATICO" ALLIANCE WITH THE CABANILLAS-LED PARTIDO POPULAR AND SOME LIBERALS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, SPOKE BRIEFLY WITH EMBOFF MARCH 30.

2. ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA MADE THE OBVIOUS POINT THAT EVERYONE
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IS WAITING FOR SUAREZ AND UPON SUAREZ' DECISION WILL HINGE THE WAY THE ELECTORAL GAME AND, IN PARTICULAR, THE CENTER WILL PLAYOUT. LIKE CABANILLAS (REF) ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA WANTED SUAREZ TO RUN, BUT DID NOT GET INTO THE QUESTION OF HOW. IN TURN HE SAID, SUAREZ WAS OBVIOUSLY WAITING TO SEE IF THE FERMENT IN THE CENTER WOULD SETTLE SINCE HE JUDGED SUAREZ WAS NOT INTERESTED IN MAKING FRIENDS

WITH SOME AND ENEMIES OF OTHERS. HERE THINGS WERE MURKY. THE PARTIDO POPULAR (PP), FOLLOWING AREILZA'S RESIGNATION, WAS IN SHAMBLES DURING IT'S SUNDAY MEETING, BUT ON MONDAY IT SEEMED TO BE PULLING ITSELF TOGETHER AGAIN. HE STILL HOPED THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "TEAM," UPON THEIR RETURN TO MADRID, WOULD AGREE TO COME TOGETHER IN SOME FASHION WITH OTHER CENTRIST GROUPS IN A BROAD ALLIANCE OF CD'S, PP, LIBERALS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. OTHERWISE, HE FEARED THAT THE VARIOUS CENTRIST GROUPS WOULD TAKE "PRECIOUS VOTES" FROM EACH OTHER TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE ALIANZA POPULAR. HE BLAMED THE YOUNGER GIL ROBLES (NOW THAT THE OLDER GIL ROBLES HAS STEPPED DOWN) FOR THE CD "TEAM'S" HESITANCE, ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA WAS WORRIED, BUT (UNLIKE CABANILLAS) NOT DISCOURAGED THINKING THAT SOMEHOW THINGS WOULD WORK OUT.

3. COMMENT: ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA AND CABANILLAS FEEL SUAREZ SHOULD TAKE THE PLUNGE, BUT THERE ARE DIVERGENCES EVEN WITHIN CENTRO DEMOCRATICO AS TO THE APPROPRIATE MODALITIES (SEE, FOR INSTANCE, MADRID 2445). EVEN MORE PRONOUNCED DIFFERENCES ON THIS QUESTION APPEAR TO SEPARATE ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA, WHO LEANS TOWARD A MORE PARTISAN ROLE ON SUAREZ'S PART, FROM HIS CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC BRETHREN IN THE CD "TEAM," WHO ARE MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE WITH AN "INDEPENDENT" SUAREZ, RUNNING, BUT TENDING TO STAY ABOVE THE PARTISAN FRAY IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE CREDIBILITY OF THE OUTCOME. EVEN SO, THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PICTURE IS BEGINNING TO GEL. EATON
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